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ABSTRACT

Child care instructors and their aides at the Good Shepherd Day Care Center, Punta Gorda, Florida, were taught skills needed to develop classroom activities matching the cognitive development of 3- and 4-year-old children. Through a program of in-service activity in child growth and development, instruction was provided to enable teachers to more effectively match learning styles to individual learners. Training also included on-site visits to help set up a stimulating environment. Participants increased their knowledge of child growth and development and their use of learning/interest centers in the classroom setting. Appended to the report are questionnaires used to determine child caregivers' educational levels and instructional practices, to assess caregivers' knowledge of child growth and development, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop series. Also appended are a list of materials recommended for workshops on child growth and development; content outlines of the workshop series; an observation guide for evaluating learning centers; a list guiding caregivers in denoting the values for children of learning/interest center activities; suggested play court patterns; activities promoting motor ability and perceptual-motor development; and reading hints for parents. (RH)

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Providing Education to Child Care Instructors: Matching Children's Learning Activities to Cognitive Development

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N O V A U N I V E R S I T Y

Providing Education to Child Care Instructors: Matching Children's Learning Activities To Cognitive Development

by

Margaret M. Desjardins

Cluster 17

A Practicum Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program
in Early Childhood
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1985

Verifier of Practicum I:
Headmistress Kathy Cannady
Good Shepherd Parish Day School
Post Office Box 699
Punta Gorda, Florida 33950

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Kathy Carmody
Name

Director - Good Shepherd Parent Day
Title

P.O. Box 699 Punta Gorda, Fla
Address

5/27/85
Date

This practicum report was submitted by (Margaret M. Desjardins) under the direction of the reviewer listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Early Childhood at Nova University.

Approved:

6-26-85
6-26-85
Date of Final Approval of Report

Jeri Sorosky, Ed.D.
Jeri Sorosky, Ed.D.

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ABSTRACT

Providing Education to Child Care Instructors: Matching Children's Learning Activities to Cognitive Development. Desjardins, Margaret M., 1985: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early Childhood. Descriptors: Preschool Children / Preschool Education / Developmental Stages / Cognitive Development / Cognitive Process / Learning Theories / Learning Readiness / Affective Objectives / Teacher Certification / Preschool Teacher

This practicum addressed the need to improve the quality of instruction at the child care level, not only by educating the instructors as to the developmental stages of cognition, but also by helping instructors to develop a stimulating and varied environment in which learning would take place according to each child's cognitive stage of development. In a review of the literature, the writer found that educational requirements for child care workers, on the local, state, and national levels, varied greatly and that application of sound pedagogy to instructional practices was directly proportional to the educational background of the child care instructors.

The writer's goals were to provide child care instructors and aides with the educational skills necessary to develop learning activities to match cognitive levels in three-and four-year-olds. Criteria for having met these goals were that the participants of the workshop series would indicate growth to the mean score of 4.0 on a 5.0 scale in both knowledge and application of knowledge to classroom practices.

Of the child care instructors and aides who participated in the workshop series and on-site visitations, 85% increased both their knowledge of child growth and development and their use of learning/interest centers in the classroom setting.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Work Setting and The Writer

The Good Shepherd Day Care, located in Punta Gorda, Florida, is an all day child care facility for two-, three-, and four-year-old children. Now in the twenty-fifth year of servicing the community's child care needs, Good Shepherd Day Care is the oldest and most established child care facility of Charlotte County's eleven child care centers. This facility serves the community from 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The physical plant is completely new and consists of three classrooms, a large all-purpose room, a kitchen preparation area, and a well-equipped, fenced-in playground. Built three years ago, the facility can be expanded to accommodate the explosive population growth in the Charlotte County area.

The current enrollment of the school totals 84 preschool children: 27 two-year-olds, 28 three-year-olds, and 29 four-year-olds. Class size approximates 28 children per classroom. There is a waiting list of 19 children. One teacher and one aide are assigned to each preschool group.

According to the director of the school (K. Cannady, personal communication, November 15, 1984), 58% of the parents are white-collar workers. Teachers, nurses, and bankers comprise the highest percentage of occupations in this group. Thirty-seven percent of the parents are

blue-collar workers who are employed in some phase of the construction industry as masons, electricians, plumbers, and carpenters. The remaining 5% are unemployed. Of the 84 preschoolers enrolled, there are 80 white and 4 black children. No bilingual or migrant children are enrolled (K. Cannady, personal communication, December 12, 1984).

After school, a babysitting service is offered to parents whose children attend the local elementary school. All of these children have been preschool students at this child care center. Enrollment is separate from the preschool enrollment and totals approximately 20 students from K-6.

The preschool children have a structured daily routine which begins at 9:00 a.m. and continues to 12:00 lunchtime. During this time, they participate in opening exercises and classroom activities according to age-grouping. The remaining time in the child's day is unstructured, and the child care worker's role is supervisory.

The staff includes the director, three full-time teachers, and three aides. In addition, high school girls volunteer their services under the supervision of the home economics teacher as part of their child care course requirement at the local high school.

The director's role is to oversee the functioning of the center. She also hires and trains staff, designs and implements curriculum, and plans for future growth.

The full-time instructor's academic responsibilities include teaching two hours a day, planning instructional

lessons, and participating in parent conferences. Additional non-instructional responsibilities include housekeeping chores and supervision of children during playground time, lunchtime, and after school time.

The humanistic environment is warm and nurturing. The staff strives to educate the children in reading readiness, counting, color recognition, and fine motor development. These skills form the core of the academic curriculum.

The learning environment is traditional and teacher-centered. Unstructured play time allows the children to interact freely with their peers. During classroom play time, the teacher monitors behavior but is otherwise a non-participant in the play activities of the children. None of the staff, including the director, has received any further schooling beyond the high school level. Although no instructors or aides have participated in any in-service training or taken any courses in early childhood, all have expressed willingness to attend any workshops which would increase their knowledge. At the present time, Charlotte County has no educational certification requirements for child care workers.

The writer of this practicum has had a variety of educational experiences prior to her present position as instructor in the Department of Arts and Language at Manatee Community College, South Campus, located in Venice, Florida. Previous to her current position, this writer had been the Reading Coordinator in the Charlotte County school system

K-12. In that capacity, this writer chaired the committee for adoption and implementation of a new reading series K-6, developed a new evaluation tool for Headstart children to determine kindergarten readiness, held in-service programs for primary teachers to redesign the report card at the primary level, and redesigned the curriculum at the headstart level. Through a series of Dare to Listen workshops for teachers, this writer focused on listening skills at the primary level. For thirteen years prior to 1980, this writer was involved with teaching and curriculum design at a variety of grade levels from kindergarten through high school. Currently, in addition to the position of reading and writing instructor at the college level, this writer is working towards the implementation of early childhood courses for students majoring in education at the South Campus. For the last four years, this writer also taught the Reading in the Content Area course, K-4. The course is designed for teachers (in Charlotte County, Florida) wishing to extend their teaching certificates. Additionally, as an educational consultant, this writer provides services to the local child care facilities in Charlotte County.

B. The Community

Charlotte County is no longer "Florida's best kept secret" as the Chamber of Commerce has long boasted in its brochure. This sunbelt community of Southwest Florida is experiencing a population growth and economic explosion that is projected to continue well into the next century.

Currently, Charlotte County, consisting of Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, Murdock, and part of Englewood, has a population approaching 80,000. The 1980 census figure placed the population at 50,000. The last four years have seen the population increase 30,000 people. General Development Corporation, the major builder of the community, projects a community of 120,000 people by 1990.

The schools reflect the rising tide of population. Currently there are five elementary schools, three junior high schools, three high schools, and eleven registered private child care facilities. With every school filled to capacity, school construction projections provided by the superintendent's office call for another elementary school, possibly two, a junior high school, and possibly an additional high school within the next five years.

The economy is sustained through tourism and small service-oriented businesses along State Road 41. Plans are underway to attract light industry to this rapidly growing area on Charlotte Harbor.

To preserve quality education, the public school system carefully chooses its teachers with regard to their educational background and professional experiences. Last year over 2,000 applicants applied to fill approximately 55 instructional vacancies (P. Stoever, personal communication, December 12, 1984).

There are no such provisions for the eleven private child care facilities. These centers are not regulated by

the school board, and there are no educational certification standards required by the county or the state of Florida.

A contributing cause to these problems is the high turnover rate in the child care profession. According to the director of this child care facility, in the last five years the Good Shepherd Day Care has replaced staff members at the rate of approximately 40% each year. The national turnover rate in child care is 15-30% a year (Gould, 1983). The national average is 10% in most human service fields; thus, the problem of 40% turnover rate at this child care facility far exceeds the national average for human services and for the child care profession as a whole.

Chapter II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

A. Statement of the Problem

The educational curricula at the Good Shepherd Day Care Center fell primarily into the category of a structured programmed model; that is to say, the learning experiences were extensively teacher-dominated and afforded the children few opportunities for initiating activities. Teachers placed a heavy emphasis on convergent thinking and drill and repetition. The daily plans of the instructors were oriented towards specific procedures, content, and materials.

A high percentage of the two-hour class time was spent on completion of workbook pages and various ditto sheets. In this approach to learning, "little energy needs to be devoted to collecting resource materials, and evaluating children's total development, and finding a match between children's abilities and interests" (McCarthy, 1983, p. 276).

The way a child perceives the world and incorporates new experiences contributes to understanding and skill development in any educational setting (Cannella, 1982). The early childhood instructors need to demonstrate a sound understanding of young children, a sensitivity to their individual needs, and an ability to turn a common incident into a valuable learning experience if the young child is to develop new insights about his/her roles and capabilities. The physical environment and the learning experiences should be familiar to the child and should build the foundation for

learning in a physically and psychologically stimulating learning environment.

During individual interviews, seven child care instructors expressed frustration with their limited knowledge of early childhood education. They had planned to take their first early childhood classes at a community college during Semester I, 1985. When the course was canceled, the instructors were left without professional help and guidance to make decisions regarding the curricular and individual learning needs of the children.

THE PROBLEM REMAINED THAT CHILD CARE INSTRUCTORS WERE NOT TRAINED TO MATCH THE LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO THE CHILD'S COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT.

B. Documentation of the Problem

The results of The Child Care Educational Questionnaire (Appendix A), The Child Care Instructional Questionnaire (Appendix B), interviews with the child care instructors and aides, and direct classroom observation indicated that a problem existed.

The Child Care Educational Questionnaire was administered individually to each of the seven instructors and aides in an interview format. All seven respondents were female with an average age of 30 years. Five were full-time and two were part-time workers. Their experience in the field of child care ranged from two months to 11 years with the mean time of 4.2 years spent in child care. All respondents performed a variety of activities in

addition to their teaching responsibilities such as parent conferences, housekeeping chores, and daily activity plans.

All seven of the respondents were high school graduates. None of the seven child care workers had recieved a higher degree than a high school diploma, nor were any working toward a higher level. No respondent had taken any courses in early childhood growth and development, nor had any attended educational conferences. The respondents were willing to pay for additional training should there have been a cost involved. During the personal interviews, six of the seven instructors and aides expressed concern about the cost of such training to attend workshops. Low wages and long distance travel to attend workshops were the main reasons for this concern.

All respondents were eager and excited about the planned workshops by this writer, but none had any ideas or input as to what should be included or what they would have liked or expected to learn from these workshops. Furthermore, none of the respondents had ever subscribed to any professional journals in the field of early childhood. The school itself does not subscribe to any professional journals.

The interview technique was also used by this writer in the administration of The Child Care Instructional Questionnaire (Appendix B). As shown in Table 1, on a scale of 5 (high) to 1 (low), the following mean scores were derived from the seven child care instructor and aide

respondents:

Table 1

Mean Performance Scores of Instructor's Strategies to Teaching

Item	Instructional Strategy	Mean Score
3	I view play time to be just as valuable as direct instructional time.	1.4
4	There is more than one activity taking place at one time in my class.	1.3
9	If a child is not ready to learn a skill, I do not have him/her try anyhow.	2.7
10	I feel knowledgeable about child growth and development.	1.6
14	I use learning centers to teach.	1.0

On the instructional questionnaire, all seven respondents selected the structured-programmed curricular model as most representing their teaching style.

C. Analysis of the Problem

At this point, several problems became apparent. The most obvious problem was the lack of early childhood preparation on the part of the child care workers. None of the participants had taken any courses in early

childhood. Instructors and aides were using their own best judgement as to what constituted sound pedagogy.

A comparison study undertaken from 1978 - 1981 stated that there was a clear nationwide shift downward from the Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Arts provision to the requirement for the Child Development Associate credential. Only 3 states of the 50 states had tightened their academic provisions for child care center staff (Davis and Alexander, 1982).

Another cause of the problem was the absence of a licensing process by the state of Florida. There were and still are no guidelines set down by the state and no educational requirements set forth (Davis and Alexander, 1982). The only specification by the state of Florida was and still is the Child/Staff ratio of 20:1.

The Charlotte County School Board office did not exert control or provide guidelines for child care centers. An interview with the Director of Elementary Education, (P. Doby, personal communication, November 15, 1984), revealed only one joint information exchange session between child care instructors and kindergarten teachers in the spring of 1982. No workshops were extended to include child care workers, nor was the school board office even aware of the number of child care centers in Charlotte County.

A contributing cause to the problem was the high turnover rate in the child care profession. According to the director of this child care center, in the last five

years, the Good Shepherd Day Care Center had replaced staff members at the rate of approximately 40% each year. The turnover rate in child care was 15-30% a year (Gould, 1983).

D. Related Literature

Early childhood education has a lower level of societal acceptance than do other levels of education. Occupational status, as measured by income, is lower for child care workers than for public school teachers, and less preparation is required for admission to the field (Spodek, 1982). Child care workers are often prepared within a child development setting rather than an educational setting. Spodek contends that sometimes child care practitioners have little or no formal preparation at all and that they may or may not be subject to state certification requirements. Spodek further states that "there is no authoritative source of information on the preparation of early childhood personnel in relation to either programs that are designed to serve practitioners or the institutions that sponsor such preparation" (p. 402).

The best informational source is a list of colleges or post-secondary institutions compiled by the ERIC/EECE and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Rothenberg, 1979). The National Day Care Study (NDCS) (Roupp et al, 1979) profiled the caregivers: Educationally, 31.4% of head teachers and 29.3% of teachers held bachelors degrees; 11.4% head teachers and 8.2% teachers held advanced degrees; 20% head teachers and 12.3% teachers

held associate degrees; and 15.9% held no degree at all including high school diplomas. Caregivers were overwhelmingly female (93.7%), and two-thirds were between eighteen and thirty-five years of age. Sixty-six percent were white, 28% were black, and 7% minority. Thus, the child care teachers were predominantly women whose educational attainment seemed to be lower than teachers in general.

NDCS results demonstrated that certain regulatable program characteristics were associated with behaviors of children and caregivers and with children's gains in the cognitive, language, and socio-emotional areas. Collins (1983) reported that classroom composition and caregiver qualifications, in particular, were linked with positive classroom dynamics. NDCS recommended small groups supervised by lead caregivers with career preparation in child development and early childhood education. Collins further stated that when the lead teachers have child-related career preparation, social interaction in the classroom increases by 28% and intellectual gains are larger. Additionally, as the proportion of classroom staff having child-related education and training increases, the children's gain on test scores rises 25%.

Since the principal responsibility for regulation of child care in the United States has always resided with state and local government, the licensing requirements as of March, 1981, for groups of four-year-olds varied widely from state to state in the following basic criterion:

child-staff ratio, group size, and educational background requirements, such as Child Development Associate Credential, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Arts degrees. The state of Florida specifies only the child staff ratio (20:1), but it has set no specifications as to group size or educational requirements (Collins, 1983). Twenty-six states have adopted CDA in their draft regulations. Ten states and the District of Columbia require a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree; however, only three states specified that the degree be in early childhood education or child development. Thirty-eight states cite requirements for child care or nursery school teachers that amount to less than six semester hours of coursework (Ade, 1982). Outside of the primary grade level, the license to practice is easily obtainable and the criteria few and minimal.

Since there are no specifications or training requirements for early childhood educational degrees in the state of Florida, a trend toward differentiated staffing patterns within preschool programs has emerged. Aides, teachers, head teachers, and administrators, all found in most child care centers, have diverse backgrounds, skills, knowledge and training. New content is now being presented by staff members with varied educational preparation.

Davis and Alexander (1982) stated that in many centers aides are placed in teacher roles. In fact, many directors take pride in the fact that staff members are interchangeable. But, filling a job and doing it competently are not the same

thing. Some programs do not recognize that teaching is a complex activity that requires intense preparation and a sophisticated array of skills, knowledge, and ability. In many cases a person with limited knowledge is hired as an aide and ends up responsible for instructing pupils.

Much of the literature in early childhood education suggests that important teacher qualifications are rooted in the basic personal characteristics of teachers as opposed to the competencies that might have resulted from the participation in teacher training programs (Almy, 1975). To provide programs that will benefit children, there needs to be a clarification of roles, responsibilities, and training requirements among those working at child care centers.

In its draft proposal on criteria for high quality early childhood programs (1983), The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) proposed goals and criteria to achieve those goals. Component five dealt with staff qualifications and development.

The governing board of NAEYC is considering three levels based on staff qualifications: early childhood assistant, early childhood teacher, and early childhood specialist. Early childhood assistant, the first level, would include professional workers who carry the program activities under supervision and would require participation in professional development programs. The next level, early childhood teacher, would be designed for professionals who

are in charge of groups of children. An Associate of Arts degree or CDA credential plus one full year of teaching experience would be required. Finally, the early childhood specialist, would direct educational programs in early childhood centers, supervise and train staff, and design curriculum. The minimum education would be a Bachelor of Arts degree in early childhood education and at least one year of full-time experience working with young children. These uniform standards for child care workers, when established, will be adopted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (1981), the demand for preschool and kindergarten teachers will be increased by 26.2% in 1990 as compared to 1978. Since this figure is significantly greater than the increase of 5.2% expected in the demand for all teachers, the field of early childhood must begin to formulate policy and begin to regulate educational requirements if it is to continue to exist.

In addition to the discrepancy between academic preparation and training, there also exist discrepancies in curriculum design for preschool children. If educators are to create curricula that are relevant to and appropriate for maximizing the potential of young children, they must match theory to practice.

Developmental theory ideally describes patterns of growth in cognitive, social, perceptual, and affect areas

(Siegal, 1972). A better understanding of theory thus leads to materials and practices designed to match theory with cognitive stages of development.

Many early attempts by educators to utilize developmental stages as curriculum goals were restricted to the preschool level (Kamii, 1972; Weikart, 1971), and were directed toward attainment of Piaget's stage of "concrete operations." Kamii and Devries (1977) in their program objectives argued that it was Piaget's theory of the mechanisms of intellectual development, not his stages, that held the most significance. Since knowledge is an act of the subject on objects, intellectual development takes place only as a result of the individual's own construction activity (Kamii and Devries, 1977). Therefore, educators should be concerned with establishing an educational environment that is rich in opportunities for such activity.

In Kamii and Devrie's program, "traditional" curriculum base included activities such as block-building, listening to stories, singing, playing musical instruments, constructing with sand and water, etc.. The traditional curriculum, they believe, is rich in possibilities for intellectual development.

Furth and Wacks (1974), on the other hand, cited as their primary objective the child's acquiring "the habit of creative, independent thinking." They constructed curriculum around a set of "thinking games" for production of cognitive activity.

Piagetian preschool programs have shifted course from advocating a highly structured, content-prescribed curriculum to advocating that children direct their own activities in a cognitively rich, supportive environment. The newer programs believe that only children themselves can accomplish this development through their own self-directed activity. The educator provides the optimal environment in which this development can occur.

Kohlberg (1968) provided a comprehensive discussion of the revelance of a Piagetian-based cognitive development orientation with implications for the introduction of various types of cognitive curricula in the preschool. This perspective "is based on the premise that the cognitive and affective structures which education should nourish are natural emergents from the interaction between the child and environment under conditions where such interaction is allowed or fostered" (Kohlberg, 1968, p. 1015). Although Kohlberg acknowledged the significance of social-emotional variables, his emphasis was cognitive. Siegel (1982) pointed out that Piaget's theory is a useful base for a curriculum because it clearly shows, for teaching purposes, the cognitive abilities, and it creates an in-depth developmental perspective on the subject matter activities at the preschool level.

The wide range of curricular models in early childhood education is equally as expansive from the structured-programmed experience that is teacher planned

and directed, to the child-initiated learning experience. McCarthy (1983) examined the roles played by teachers and children and classified these models into one of four major categories: structured-programmed, open-interactive, child-centered, and eclectic.

The structured-programmed model is oriented toward specific procedures, content, and materials. Learning experiences are teacher-dominated and children have few opportunities to initiate play activities. Emphasis is placed on convergent thinking, drill, repetition, modification of child behavior, and use of material rewards or deprivation as a way of controlling actions and reactions.

The open-interactive model, designed around Piaget's theory of cognitive development, emphasizes learning through direct experience. The teacher provides materials and equipment in a physical environment which stimulates interaction with objects and people. The focus is toward development of cognition through teacher-inititated activities. These activities are designed to involve and encourage children to develop their ability and are paced according to each child's individual stage of cognition.

The third model, the child-centered model, emphasizes development of the whole child. In addition to cognitive development, emotional, social, and physical development are considered equally important. Developing process, assisting the child in creative expression, feeling positive about self, and being aware of one's environment are

essential to child-centered models. The teacher takes her cue from observed behaviors and responds with experiences for the child in a physical environment similar to the open-interactive model. The needs of the individual are the primary focus.

The eclectic model is the fourth model and this model varies greatly within itself. It ranges from programs that are totally unstructured and "just happen" to tightly run programs.

McCarthy (1983) stated that there is not enough data to suggest one model is more beneficial than another. She did contend that "children profit intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally from a curriculum that is based on a wide range of experiences" (p. 278).

In structuring the learning environment, educators must investigate the effects of play on children's cognitive growth. From the beginning, play has been an important element in the early childhood education curriculum (Evans, 1975; Spodek, 1974). It was assumed that play was a legitimate learning activity which contributed to the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of the child (Sponseller, 1974).

During the 1960's there was increasing pressure to replace play with academic, content-oriented activities. In an effort to keep play from being forced out of the curriculum, an abundance of articles were published explaining the values of play, expecially as a facilitator

of cognitive growth. These articles relied heavily on psychological theories (Piaget, 1951; Vygotsky, 1976) which demonstrated the important role of play in cognitive development. Indeed, Piaget's distinctions between sensori-motor, symbolic, practice plays, and games follow from his own theory of intelligence. Schwartzman's (1979) distinctions between symmetrical play dyads are meant to express an underlying parent-child and child-child interaction. Bateson (1972) views play-time as first and foremost a kind of communication.

What role then should play have in the curriculum, and what outcomes should be expected? Evans (1975) noted that the issue is not "play versus no play," but the degree of emphasis which is placed on play in an early childhood curriculum. Play can be viewed as a reflection of a child's developmental level. Practitioners can view this play as a diagnostic tool for assessment of children and/or the program. Play also can be seen as an opportunity to practice skills and as a causal agent in developmental change. The return to play in the 1970's from the increasing realization that play was interrelated with thinking skills and intellectual growth was a "dynamic educative process in its own right" (Yawkey, 1979, p. 248).

The literature concerning the setting of play indicates that the manner in which adults arrange environment, introduce materials, and participate in play will affect the overall distribution of specific play behaviors. Caregivers

can profitably take a more active role in guiding and structuring play.

For younger preschoolers, adults appear necessary in establishing social play sequences. Although play training studies have not conclusively demonstrated the value of play, adult involvement in play shows positive effects. The role of adult modeling of play behaviors and reinforcement of play forms has been shown effective (Serbin and Conners, 1979). Also effective is curricula in which adults play an active role in the questioning and introduction and maintenance of activity (Kamii and Devries, 1977). The caregiver plays a major role in stimulating the child's learning environment. Some of the most important cues the caregiver can provide are based upon arrangement of the environment and the use of space and selection of play materials.

Children need toys that are realistic replicas to assist in the pretend process. Later in development, less realistic toys can facilitate the same process. Play materials shape the roles of the actor, and personal guidance adds to dramatic and sociodramatic play. Selection of play materials for the child care center means purchasing and using objects "that elicit quantity and quality to play actions" (Yawkey and Hancia, 1982, p. 269). Yawkey recommended instructional materials (e.g. clay, water, sand), structured materials (e.g. large and small boxes) as necessary environmental inclusions for imaginative play to

facilitate oral language growth.

In conclusion, there is a wide discrepancy not only in the preparation and requirements of child care workers, but also in the curricular-based theories and models from which to choose. The curriculum should truly be a resource for the teacher, aiding one in assessing needs, selecting appropriate learning experiences, and evaluating the child's progress at the child's own level of cognition.

The role teachers play in their interaction with the child often times reflects their level of knowledge of child growth and development practices. Since there are no accepted outcome criteria for preschool, the nature of the child care programs are usually determined by the bias and perspective of the preschool teacher.

One framework in which to organize the educational component of the preschool curricular is the Piagetian-based cognitive developmental theory. The teacher's role is to provide the match between the child's developmental level and the appropriate learning experience. Play is an important way to provide that match. Setting up the learning environment and providing the space, materials, and toys to stimulate and facilitate the child's intellectual development creates a positive, success-oriented child.

Chapter III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

A. Statement of General Goals

The goal of this practicum was to provide child care instructors and their aides at the Good Shepherd Day Care Center with the skills necessary to develop learning activities to match cognitive development in three-and four-year-old children. Through a program of in-service activity in child growth and development, instruction was provided so that teachers were able to more effectively match learning styles to individual learners.

The scope of this in-service training was extended to include on-site visitations to help set up a stimulating environment. These three visitations took place on February 27, 1985, March 13, 1985, and March 27, 1985.

B. Terminal Performance Objectives

The specific behavioral objectives considered evidence of having met the general goals of increased knowledge of child growth and development by instructors and aides, and application of that knowledge through the matching of the child's learning to his cognitive level of development are as follows:

1. The seven teachers and aides participating in the workshop will indicate growth to the mean score of 4.0 on their knowledge of child growth and development.

2. The seven teachers and aides participating in the workshops will indicate growth to the mean score of 4.0 on their application of knowledge of child growth and development. This is referred to in this practicum as the open-interactive child centered model.
3. One hundred percent of the seven workshop participants evaluating the inservice workshops will indicate success to the mean score of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

C. Description of Evaluative Instrument

Prior to the implementation of this practicum, the seven instructors and aides participating in the workshop series were interviewed and asked to complete a questionnaire detailing a description of their job duties and their educational background and training in early childhood (Appendix A). Another questionnaire in the form of a rating scale was also administered which reflected their instructional practices and teaching styles (Appendix B). Instructors and aides were also asked to complete three free response statements and to check one of the three teaching styles that most closely reflected the way they taught and interacted with children: the structured-programmed approach, the open-interactive approach, or the child-centered approach. All characteristics of each learning style were listed to help participants in their

selection.

Additionally, after the workshop series was completed, the instructors and aides were asked to complete a two part assessment instrument (Appendix C). Part I consisted of twelve multiple choice items and tested the knowledge gained in child growth and development during the workshop series. Growth of participants was measured from a mean score response on item number ten of the pre-assessment instrument (Appendix B).

Part II, a rating scale of high to low (5 to 1), post-tested the application of instructional practices and reflected any change in teaching style. Growth in this area was measured from a mean score response on items number 3, 4, 9, and 14 of The Child Care Instructional Questionnaire (Appendix B).

Upon completion of the three workshop sessions, participants were asked to complete an in-service evaluation form (Appendix D). This form was distributed, collected, and evaluated by this writer. To determine the success of this workshop presentation, a numerical value was assigned to each of the descriptive assessment items as follows: excellent (4), good (3), fair (2), and poor (1). These numerical values were assigned to items numbered 1, 2, and 4 of the participant evaluation sheet. Each of these was assessed independently with an overall mean provided for item number 2. A final overview mean of items 1, 2, and 4 determined the success of the workshop series. A mean score

of 3.0 on the 4.0 scale was considered by this writer as a successful workshop. The respondents were also asked what new topics should be added to future programs. Suggestions for change and improvement in the organization and format of the workshop series were encouraged. Participants were also asked if they would be interested in attending other programs.

As an additional assessment of the application of knowledge of child growth and development, this writer conducted three on-site visitations. Using a structured set of guided questions (Appendix G), this writer was able to observe the physical organization of the classroom (before and after visitations), and the nature of interactions between child and teacher as well as among children themselves (before and after visitations).

Growth in the type of materials and quality and quantity of learning/interest centers was directly observable. More attractive, child-centered interest areas emerged in which children were able to explore independently, curiosity was stimulated, and in which materials were carefully selected to foster the learning process at varying levels of cognition.

Another informal self-evaluative tool was administered during the last on-site visitation. The instructor or aide studied the learning/interest center she had designed and checked off the values that each activity held for the child (Appendix H). For example, the activity may

have developed large muscles, rhythm, good work habits, and emotional release. Participants were then asked to list any other values that this particular interest center could provide for young children. Participants were also given several blank self-evaluative checklists and encouraged to analyze the value of each activity center they developed.

After completion of the implementation phase of this practicum, the data were analyzed and presented in this final practicum report. Evaluations and comparisons of the pre-and-post assessment instruments are presented in narration form and as numerical totals in Chapter V.

Chapter IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

A. Possible Alternative Solutions

An extensive examination of the literature related to effective instructional training for child care workers revealed a number of staff and training programs already in place; however, most programs examined the theoretical implications of such programs but did not get down to the "how to" considerations of staff instruction. Where instructional programs do exist "they are usually adjuncts to existing degreed programs in child development - - principally for preschool teachers" (Smith, 1974, p. vii).

The programs examined by this writer confirmed the notion that instruction in child growth was primarily the function of a formalized, educationally degreed program or programs of training, such as the Child Development Associate credential.

Valuable instructional strategies, for example, the preparation of learning/interest centers were detailed in many programs (Responsive Care Program, 1973). However, background knowledge of sound pedagogy was presumed.

Goodwin and Prusso (1977) reported on early childhood education staff development in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania schools. They examined staff development activities across eight early childhood education programs in Philadelphia. Goodwin and Prusso (1977) also reported that in six of the eight early childhood programs surveyed,

at least half of the teachers expressed a willingness to attend staff development sessions on their own time without reimbursement in using the creative arts, improvement of basic skills, and individualizing instruction.

These findings were closely correlated to the findings this writer experienced when administering the educational and instructional questionnaires to each child care worker at the Good Shepherd Day Care Center. Instructors at Good Shepherd were eager to give of their time to learn about child growth and development and to reorganize their classrooms to accommodate a more individualized form of instruction. Participants understood that there would be no financial remuneration nor any type of college credit for their participation in the early childhood growth and development workshop series.

A program by Soavo (1982) focused on creating environments for preschoolers. This child environment series was an outgrowth of the Military Child Care Project sponsored by the United States' Assistant Secretary of Defense, Manpower, Reserve Affairs. The program set down guidelines for arranging environments appropriate for preschool-age children in a staff development module.

Part one of the module focused on how environments affect children's feelings and behaviors and on ways to organize indoor and outdoor play areas to offer children a variety of experiences. Part two of the module discussed encouraging the development of the child through play.

Focus was on arrangement of the play area, but nowhere was the importance of play at various levels of a child's growth and development addressed. Making learning center space available included suggestions such as "utilizing different play areas to allow for a variety of activities" (Soavo, 1982, p. 12).

Brofenbrenner (1977) presented the idea that the environment is a microsystem which encompasses the interaction between the child and his/her environment in the child's immediate setting. He suggested that sensitivity, skills in observation, personal interaction, communication, and ability to structure the immediate physical setting to meet the child's needs were among the qualities necessary of the effective worker in the microsystem.

Where does the instructor build the skills to become an effective facilitator in this microsystem? That is not defined but again presumed to take place in a formalized, traditional educational environment--college.

Katz (1979, p. 2) stated: "I think it is a useful general proposition that we cannot have optimum environments for children in centers and classrooms unless we also have optimum environments for their teachers and caretakers." Katz outlined six principles as recommended for in-service education. Principle three recommended a focus on competencies already acquired. "In our eagerness to affect change, we often overlook the possibility that the teachers

we work with may already have the competencies appropriate for a given situation" (Katz, 1979, p. 5). He then suggested that if those competencies already existed, one should help teachers use them more reliably, consistently or confidently.

What, however, if those competencies did not exist? There was no provision for an absence of the basic foundation competencies in his principles as outlined. Again, the responsibility for the development of foundations in child growth was presumed to rest in our hallowed halls of academia. What if the instructors did not have access to a near-by college? What if the instructors did not have any educational requirements set down by state or county mandate? What if wages were minimal and courses were not paid for by employers?

Read (1976) suggested some specific skills needed by those who work in child care settings. One of Read's suggestions was to use voice as a teaching tool to help the child feel confident and reassured. Another suggestion was to give the child a minimum of help so that he might "maximize his chance to grow in independence" (Read, 1976, p. 99). Again, Read's guidelines and suggestions were of little value to an instructor who had not developed the concepts underlying these suggestions.

The final report of the Responsive Care Program, sponsored by the National Institute of Education in Washington, D.C. (1973), was designed to facilitate the

development of children's social and cognitive abilities through the providing of a rich environment and responsive instructional techniques. The program was first implemented at Syracuse University with preschool children. The premise was that optimal learning was likely to occur when a child's basic physical needs were met in a rich environment. The environment should provide for experiences that a child could assimilate. Adults in this program provided feedback directly and through modeling.

The Responsive Care Program produced a series of training manuals for prospective staff to implement the program. The manuals consisted of: Administrator's Handbook A Guide for Trainers of Responsive Care Teachers; Responsive Care Teacher's Guide; and In-service Training Packets.

The three basic areas covered in this program were the active area, the expressive area, and the task area. Each of the three programs consisted of a source book which presented ideas as to how equipment and materials in each of the three basic program areas could be used for responsive instruction. These books were developed by the staff.

In the active area, the source book I Can Do It was employed. This booklet, designed for the inexperienced teacher, detailed multiple uses of active area equipment such as climbing equipment, ladders, etc.. It described various possibilities for providing instruction in three common situations: free play, climbing, and blocks. Ideas for language development were included, as were scrounge

materials which included a listing of materials and equipment that could be obtained inexpensively or at no cost.

Through the source book And So There Was Me, teachers could provide creative art experiences in the expressive area. Possibilities included sand and water play, housekeeping corners, and work bench.

A Space To Discover Me explained the third area, the task area. This source book contained the following information: aspects of task room arrangements, management and use, book corners, chalkboard areas, flannel boards, writing centers, listening centers, and animal centers.

Training of the staff in the implementation of The Responsive Care Program took part in two phases: training of pilot school directors at the Syracuse development site and pre-service teacher training at other designated pilot centers.

The primary responsibility for the training was assumed by Dr. Margaret Lay. However, the entire Syracuse staff and the Syracuse University Early Childhood Education Center teaching staff were utilized as training resources.

The week's two-hour training session consisted of instruction via slide presentation and source book instruction in each of the three task areas: active area, expressive area, and task area. Role play and simulation were used as the application of learning. Primary focus throughout the training period was on individual activity,

and each participant was encouraged to become involved in activities according to the interests and needs.

A series of eight task sheets were developed by the training staff to aid participants in answering a series of questions related to the overall training goals. These task sheets focused on space design, equipment placement and arrangement, scheduling of children and teacher's assignments, instruction, setting, record keeping, and decision making. Prior to the close of the training week, all participants were asked to rate each of the week's activities as to their value.

The Responsive Care Program was a well-designed model conducted under the auspices of Syracuse University. Since the child care staff at Good Shepherd does not have ready access to a college, such a comprehensive effort would be impractical. Given the time factor of two hours of training for five mornings, the instructors at Good Shepherd would not be able to attend in-service workshops during normal child care hours (Cannady, personal communication, December 19, 1984). Because of the cost involved, the child care center would also not be able to hire substitutes to relieve instructors of their duties during child care operating hours.

The idea of creating learning centers according to three broad range areas (task, expressive, and active) was a possibility in organizing learning/interest centers so that they could be easily understood and developed by

inexperienced practitioners.

Another program which this writer felt to be a valuable resource was the Oklahoma Child Development Associate Curriculum of Learning Activities developed by Oscar Rose Junior College in 1981. The original materials for the Oklahoma Child Development Associate Curriculum were developed through the Oklahoma Child Development Pilot Project, sponsored by a grant approved by the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The 124 learning activities included in this curriculum were designed "to give Child Development Associate (CDA) trainees many opportunities to practice and demonstrate their knowledge of child development and related skills" (Loveless, 1981, p. 1).

Section one of the training module consisted of twenty-one general learning activities that enabled the instructor to develop specific skills in working with programs for young children. These basic activities could be used many times in different ways.

Section two provided directed learning activities in each of the ten CDA curricular areas: growth and development, guidance, process planning, nutrition, health and safety, creative arts, cognitive skills, language and physical skills, parent-teacher relationships, and special needs of children. Again, the assumption of a foundation in early childhood education was made. The trainees in the CDA were applying knowledge learned in college-related

courses to the development of learning/interest centers. The trainees in this project were provided with opportunities to practice and demonstrate application of knowledge and skills they had acquired in coursework.

The Oklahoma Child Development Associate Curriculum offered a series of learning activities designed to take an instructor through each phase of the learning/interest center. For example, learning activity eight, the "Resource Inventory," (Loveless, 1981) suggested the instructor take inventory of the material found in learning centers within the instructor's classroom. The instructor must then write down at least ten items for each learning center and state the concepts that a child could learn with each item. Next, the instructor must describe a way in which the items could be used by the teacher or the child to develop learning concepts.

Learning activity nine added to the "Resource Inventory." The instructor must think of other materials that could be added to expand the material in each learning center and then make a list of these items. A follow-up to this activity suggested the instructor select ten of the items and list the concepts that could be taught using each item.

The instructor evaluated the learning centers in activity ten in the classroom according to the criteria listed for this activity (see Appendix G). The instructor then turned in the evaluation form together with a written summary of the strengths of these learning centers and a

list of recommendations for improving the learning centers.

The Observation Guide For Evaluating Learning Centers could be a valuable tool for objectively assessing the interest centers, material and equipment, and physical setting of the classroom area. For example, learning activity fourteen assessed the value of the activity itself (see Appendix H). The instructor was provided with a checksheet and was asked to evaluate the values that this activity would provide for the child (for example, exploration, self-expression, eye-hand coordination). Each interest center the instructor created was then able to be evaluated using a certain set of criteria. This writer conducted an on-site visit using this instrument to show the values of the activity.

Although many possible alternative solutions presented themselves, no one program reviewed by this writer provided the entire solution. Since most programs assumed a formal body of knowledge had been previously provided at some other level of higher education, almost all of the programs reviewed provided application of instructional strategies to child care programs. A search of the literature produced a partial solution to the problem--the application of knowledge. The acquisition of that body of knowledge was not resolved through this writer's search of literature.

B. Solution Selected

The first step in providing a solution to the practicum

problem was to enlist the help and support of the child care director. Both the educational and instructional questionnaires were administered to the staff at the child care center and the results and various solution strategies were discussed with the director.

In selecting an appropriate solution strategy, this writer considered the following:

1. The educational level and the in-service training of the child care staff in early childhood education.
2. The willingness of instructors to attend workshops on child growth and development.
3. The areas in which the staff would most like additional training.
4. The time available by the staff to attend workshop sessions.

The best solution was to prepare a series of three 2½-hour workshops. These workshops were followed by classroom visitations to help restructure the learning environment. The visitations were one two-hour visits every other week for three weeks upon completion of the workshop sessions.

At this point in the problem solving process, a solution strategy which was practical and provided an immediate resolve to a wide-spread problem at the local, state, and national levels was the best.

It was clear, from the educational and instructional

questionnaires (Appendix A and B) administered, that these child care instructors and aides had been educated in neither the foundations of early childhood education nor its teaching methodology. Since these child care personnel were already employed in their chosen profession, they had to be trained in the most expeditious manner possible so that they could begin application of knowledge immediately.

C. Calendar Plan for Action

The following schedule outlined the plan for designing, implementating, and evaluating an effective series of workshops and visitations for the child care staff at the Good Shepherd Day Care Parish School:

I. Preplanning - November and December, 1984

A. Continued review of literature.

B. Previewed films to be used in conjunction with the workshop sessions.

C. Developed a needs assessment instrument to be called The Child Care Instructional Questionnaire.

D. Developed an educational questionnaire to determine the education and training of each child care worker.

E. Met with the director of the child care center to plan the scheduling of workshops and on-site visitations, length of sessions, night of week workshops would be held, etc.

F. Set up an appointment with the director to present both the educational questionnaire and the instructional questionnaire. At this time individual interview times were scheduled with the seven instructors and aides for administration of both the questionnaires and the instructional needs assessments.

G. Held a series of scheduled one-half hour interviews with each of the seven instructors and aides for administration of both the questionnaires and the instructional needs assessments.

H. Held a series of scheduled one-half hour interviews with each of the seven instructors and aides to administer the educational questionnaire and the instructional needs assessment.

I. The following was a schedule of interview times:

1. Tuesday, November 13, 1984
   2:00 - 2:30, 2:30 - 3:00, 3:00 - 3:30
2. Thursday, November 15, 1984
   2:00 - 2:30, 2:30 - 3:00, 3:00 - 3:30
3. Friday, November 16, 1984
   2:00 - 2:30, 2:30 - 3:00, 3:00 - 3:30

J. Evaluated the results of the educational questionnaires and the instructional needs

assessment upon completion of the scheduled interviews.

K. Met with the director and finalized plans for the workshop series.

L. Determined goals and objectives for workshop series and on-site visitations.

II. Implementation - January and February, 1985

A. Workshop Series:

1. Workshop Session I

a. January 16, 1985, 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

b. Place: Good Shepherd Day Care Parish School, Punta Gorda, Florida

c. For content of workshop see Appendix E.

2. Workshop Session II

a. January 30, 1985, 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

b. Place: Good Shepherd Day Care Parish School, Punta Gorda, Florida

c. For content of workshop see Appendix E.

3. Workshop Session III

a. February 13, 1985, 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

b. Place: Good Shepherd Day Care Parish School, Punta Gorda, Florida

c. For content of workshop see Appendix E.

4. Evaluation of Effectiveness of Workshop Series

a. Evaluated the results of the Assessment of Child Care Instructor's Knowledge of

Child Growth and Development (Appendix D).

b. Evaluated the effectiveness of the workshop sessions through the completed evaluations of workshop participants (Appendix D).

c. Continued to evaluate the effectiveness of workshop participants.

B. On-Site Visitations

1. On-Site Visitation I

a. February 27, 1985, 10:00 - 11:00 (flexible time schedule).

b. Evaluated (through direct observation) the establishment of learning/interest centers.

2. On-Site Visitation II

a. March 13, 1985, 10:00 - 11:00 (flexible time schedule).

b. Evaluated (through direct observation) the progress made by staff in developing a more open-interactive learning environment.

c. Gave help where needed towards the improvement of expansion of any learning centers that had evolved since the last visitation.

d. Encouraged the development of a

reading center.

e. Encouraged the development of socio-dramatics.

f. Continued contact with the center to offer encouragement and assistance.

3. On-Site Visitation III

a. March 27, 1985, 10:00 - 11:00 (flexible time schedule).

b. Evaluated (through direct observation) progress made by staff in developing learning centers, a more open-interactive environment area, and an altered physical environment from teacher-dominated to child-centered.

c. Personally thanked each participant for their cooperation.

III. Results and Conclusions - April and May, 1985

A. Analyzed data collected through direct observation.

B. Offered feedback through written communication.

C. Wrote, typed, and submitted final report.

D. Report of Action Taken

This writer's practicum was implemented in two phases: instructional workshops on child growth and development and practical implementation of child growth and development theory through development of learning/interest centers

designed to match a child's learning to his/her cognitive instructional level.

Before the actual implementation, this writer met with the director of the child care center to plan the scheduling of the workshop sessions, the on-site visitation times, and interview session times with each of the instructors and aides. The interview time helped build rapport with the staff and gave this writer valuable insight into the child care worker's knowledge of child growth and development and current classroom practices. Should someone duplicate this practicum, this interview technique, although time consuming, was worthwhile. Half-hour sessions could be cut to twenty minutes and still yield a worthwhile verbal exchange of ideas. During the half-hour interview sessions, both The Child Care Educational Questionnaire (Appendix A) and The Child Care Instructional Questionnaire (Appendix B) were administered to instructors and aides.

The Child Care Educational Questionnaire detailed the applicant's personal data (sex and age of the participants), length of employment, job title and duties, and education and training (highest level of education achieved, previous in-service training, and willingness to attend and possibly pay for additional training/workshops). The Child Care Instructional Questionnaire asked the participant to rate nineteen items related to instructional practices on a high-low scale of five to one respectively. The questionnaires were untimed and remained anonymous. Following the

administration of the questionnaires, this writer informally discussed topics related to the questionnaires. All participants readily offered their experiences and freely asked questions.

The first phase of implementation began in January, 1985, with a series of three instructional workshops, each lasting two and one-half hours from 7:00 - 9:30 p.m. every other week for six weeks. All three sessions were voluntary and were held at the on-site location, Good Shepherd Day Care Center. All seven participants attended the three workshop sessions. This 100% attendance rate was due in part to the convenient location. Should one replicate this workshop series, it should be noted that the use of an on-site location was instrumental in not only a high attendance rate but also in the feeling of security and noticeable level of self-confidence which comes from learning in a familiar environment.

During the first instructional session, the purpose and goals of the workshop sessions were discussed and an overview of child growth and development (0 - 3 years) was delineated. Physical growth, cognitive development, (using Piaget's sensorimotor stages), social development, and language development were discussed at both infant and toddler stages.

During Workshop Session I, this writer presented a 28 minute video cassette, "Introduction " from the Growing Years Series. During the second workshop session, again

in the evening from 7:00 - 9:30 p.m., an overview of the preschool child was presented. The physical, cognitive, social, and language development of the 3 to 5-year-old child was addressed and two video cassettes on "Preschool Physical Development" and Preschool Mental Development" from the Growing Years Series were viewed and discussed

The third session, also in the evening from 7:00 - 9:30 p.m., began with the importance of play in cognition. Video selection #17 on "Play" from the Growing Years Series was shown, and a follow-up on the importance of interactive language communication was discussed. A presentation and explanation of teacher-child curricula models such as the open-interactive model and the child-centered model (see Appendix F) enabled the participants to understand the pacing of instruction according to each child's individual level of learning. Next, the structure of the learning environment and the matching of environment to cognitive stages of development was explained. Setting up learning/interest centers using the open-interactive model or the child-centered model was encouraged.

One of the suggestions made by this author's practicum reviewer was the use of a film to help explain child growth and development. Although scheduling was tight, this suggestion proved invaluable and served to solidify concepts presented orally. Selections from the Growing Years video cassette series were used so effectively throughout the workshop sessions that participants requested other

selections be viewed and discussed once a month in place of one of the weekly staff meetings. To implement such a plan, the director could request video cassettes through a local community college, and discussion could be coordinated by this writer.

At the conclusion of the workshop series, the participants were presented with a twenty item assessment (see Appendix C). Twelve of the items measured the participants' newly acquired knowledge of child growth and development which they had previously rated as low with a mean score of 1.0 on a pre-assessment instrument administered during the interview process prior to the workshop series (see Appendix B). Eight of the items on the twenty item assessment posttested Objective Two of the terminal performance standards which indicated that there would be growth in the application of knowledge of child growth and development. Items 3, 4, 9, and 14 of The Child Care Questionnaire were reassessed as items 13, 15, 17, and 19 respectively on the Assessment of Child Care Instructor's Knowledge of Child Growth and Development (see Appendix C).

The participants were also asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop series by completing an in-service evaluation form (see Appendix D). The mean score on items number 1, 2, and 4 were then derived to determine the total mean score on the effectiveness of the workshop series.

The third workshop series, although viewed as highly

effective by participants, was overloaded with concepts and took an additional thirty minutes to complete. Participants said they would rather have had this session broken down into two workshop sessions so that the information could be digested in smaller amounts. Should one wish to replicate this session, it is suggested that an additional workshop session be added to the series and that the focus be on structuring the learning environment and matching the curricula models to cognitive stages of child growth and development. This fourth session would also allow more time for administration of the assessment instruments.

The second phase of implementation, the application of knowledge through the establishment of learning/interest centers, began upon the successful completion of Phase One. This writer visited the on-site location for one to two hours every week for six weeks to offer expertise and additional ideas in the actual set-up and operation of the learning/interest centers.

Through direct observation and the use of an observation instrument to evaluate currently existing learning centers (see Appendix G), this writer was able to evaluate materials and equipment, assess child-teacher interaction, and explore effectiveness of existing learning centers using a guided set of structured questions. Physical setting was discussed with each of the three instructors and aides of the two-, three-, and four-year-old classes. Classrooms were then restructured using the Syracuse University Early Childhood

Center's Responsive Care Program model (1973). Since no learning/interest centers existed in any of the classrooms, the instructors and aides decided to set up three learning centers, one in each of the three classrooms.

Classroom free-play time was then restructured so that children rotated learning areas. Responsibility for changing learning/interest centers was the homeroom teacher's, but instructors agreed to discuss ideas and cooperate in the setting up of all three interest areas. Again, instructors felt that weekly staff meetings would be the place to discuss and organize new ideas for the center. One instructor even had her children list and decide the learning/interest areas to be constructed.

The first area, the active interest area or I Can Do It area, was housed in the two-year-old classroom and started simply with a block area. Ideas for language development were incorporated into this active area and plans were well underway to contact a retired physical education teacher to work with the children in this active area on movement education and language development. Further plans are being made for a section of the hardtop playground outside to be painted this summer thus extending the movement education/ active area to the out-of-doors. Playcourt patterns where children can play various games on number squares, letter squares, and geometric squares will be painted on the pavement this summer (see Appendix I). A listing of motor ability, perceptual-motor development, and psychomotor

survey of ideas has been developed in conjunction with the retired physical education teacher. This survey of ideas can be incorporated into formal and informal movement lessons (see Appendix J). Because the critical stages of sensorimotor adaption are from ages 3 through 5, this writer felt that the active interest I Can Do It area should provide many opportunities for experiences to enhance development of body images, spatial and directional awareness, balance, fundamental body movements, symmetry in body actions, hand-eye and foot-eye coordination, form perception, and rhythm.

The second learning/interest area, the expressive area, or And So There Was Me area, was set up in the three-year-old classroom. This area was basically for creative art experiences such as sand play, water play, housekeeping, etc.. A sand area was chosen as the first expressive area and shovels, sifters, hand eggbeaters, and molded forms were placed in this large area at the back of the room. In one end a city emerged as four-year-olds constructed buildings and road signs out of clay and building blocks.

A housekeeping corner was planned as the next expressive area to be developed. One of the parents whose avocation "clowning" around, pantomimed various housekeeping chores. The children then tried to communicate the actions by verbalizing the sequence of a household chore.

The third area constructed in the four-year-old classroom was the task area or A Space To Discover Me area.

It was unanimously decided that this area would house books and a comfortable rug to define the space. Plans are underway to encourage senior citizens to "adopt a classroom." Once a week the school plans to have these senior citizens read and orally discuss a story with the class in their reading corner. Also, the twenty elementary children who attend the child care center were paired with younger children to read stories twice a week. As an extension of the reading corner, a handout of helpful hints in reading was developed and sent out to parents showing them specific ways in which they could encourage a love of books in their children from an early age (see Appendix K).

At the conclusion of the second phase of this practicum, the instructors were asked to complete a checklist of the values of the learning/interest center they had developed (see Appendix H).

An outgrowth of this practicum was the setting up of a professional library in the director's office. Handouts and a collection of ideas were compiled into a vertical file under various child growth and development topics or under the three learning/interest topics. In addition, child growth and development textbooks were donated to the collection, and the child care director secured funding to subscribe to an early childhood magazine.

The on-site visitations were the most rewarding part of this practicum experience. As ideas began to emerge and grow, the weekly staff meetings took on a new dimension.

Each teacher gave a brief update on progress and future plans for her learning/interest centers.

Chapter V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Results

This practicum was designed to provide education in child growth and development to child care instructors and their aides and to assist in the application of that knowledge through the development of learning/interest activity centers matched to the children's level of cognition. The method chosen to educate child care instructors and aides was a series of instructional workshop sessions to provide the background knowledge of child growth and development and on-site visitations to help in the setting up and successful operation of learning/interest centers based on the children's cognitive level of development. This writer has been concerned for some time with the lack of educational requirements in Charlotte County, Florida, and with the lack of educational standards required of child care workers by the state of Florida.

To help determine the scope of the qualification and training problem that does exist, this writer surveyed child care workers (see Appendix A) as to their education, training, and previous in-service participation. All seven instructors and aides interviewed held high school diplomas, but none had any further education or training in child growth and development. When asked to comment in which two areas they would most like additional training,

no participant could think of any particular area. The majority of participants explained that because they had no background in early childhood education, they were not aware of their possibilities.

To determine the instructional teaching practices of child care instructors and their aides, a pre-assessment instrument (Appendix B) was used and instructional practices were rated on a high to low scale with 5 indicated as high and 1 indicated as low (for results see Table 1). Free response items were included as part of that pre-assessment instrument. When asked to complete the statement, "Children learn best when they _____." instructors commented: "are quiet," "not talking," "listen," "are sitting down." Another statement, "If I could change one thing about my teaching style, I would _____." produced the comments: "change nothing," "Everything is okay," "learn more about kids so I could teach them better," "?," and three did not comment. The comments generated by the free response statements clearly indicated a problem with the instructor's knowledge base in child growth and development which in turn could affect instructional practices and teaching styles.

Upon completion of the workshop series, each participant's knowledge of child growth and development was evaluated using the Assessment of Child Care Instructor's Knowledge and Application of Child Growth and Development (Appendix C). The first twelve items measured achievement

of terminal performance objective number one.

Meeting the goals of increased knowledge of child growth and development were assessed by the following criteria: 1. The instructors' and aides' responses to the evaluation instrument for Assessment of Child Care Instructor's Knowledge of Child Growth and Development (Appendix C) were used to evaluate their knowledge of child growth and development. A minimum of 85% of the seven teachers and aides participating in the workshop were to indicate growth to the mean score of 4.0 on their knowledge of child growth and development.

Of the possible 12 objective items in Part I of the Assessment of Child Care Instructor's Knowledge of Child Growth and Development (Appendix C), four of the seven participants responded correctly to all twelve items (100%). One participant scored eleven out of twelve items correctly (92%), one participant scored ten items correctly (84%), and one participant answered nine out of twelve items correctly (76%). The mean score of 4.55 was calculated and six out of seven or 85% of the seven participants scored at or above the 4.0 level of knowledge in child growth and development.

Evaluation of the results of this assessment instrument indicated that six out of seven participants in the workshop series did successfully build a knowledge base in child growth and development to the 85% mastery level. The workshop series was considered successful by this writer.

2. A second measure was the ability of the participants to demonstrate the application of that knowledge to child growth and development. A mean score of 4.0 on selected items 13, 15, 17, and 19 on Part II of the Assessment of Child Care Instructor's Knowledge and Application of Child Growth and Development (Appendix C) by seven teachers and aides participating would demonstrate success.

As shown in Table 2, on a scale of 5 (high) to 1 (low), the following comparisons of mean scores were made:

Table 2

Comparison of Mean Performance Scores of Instructional Strategies to Teaching

Instructional Strategy	Item Pre/Test	Mean Score	Item Post/Test	Mean Score	Statistical Difference
I view play time to be just as valuable as direct instructional time.	3	1.4	13	4.4	3.0
There is more than one activity taking place at one time in my class.	4	1.3	15	2.3	1.0
If a child is not ready to learn a skill, I do not have him/her try.	9	2.7	17	4.3	1.6
I use learning/ interest centers in my teaching.	14	1.0	19	5.0	4.0

A statistical difference of 3.0 in the way participants viewed play time before and after the infusion of the learning/interest centers is significant. The enthusiasm of this writer for the design and implementation of learning/interest centers, together with a newly acquired knowledge base on the importance of play, could account for the difference. The Hawthorne effect of special attention and individual help in the planning and construction of the centers may also have accounted for the difference.

There was only a slight gain of 1.0 in the mean between the pre and post scores on the statement, "There is more than one activity taking place at one time in my class." Since special times are set aside to interact with the learning/interest centers, teachers might still view the center's activity as separate from regular instructional time. This writer has suggested that the time spent on center activity be expanded to perhaps extend the concept of learning/interest centers so that eventually the traditional classroom will be absorbed into multi-learning centers. In a comparison of pre- and post-scores of the seven participants on the same item, five participants responded slightly higher from 1.0 - 2.0; one participant increased her score by 2.0 statistical difference; and one participant responded the same in both the pre- and post-evaluation of this item.

There was little statistical difference, 1.6 between the pre- and post-assessment result on the item: "If a child

is not ready to learn a skill, I do not have him/her try." Five respondents scored slightly higher, a 1.0 statistical gain, and two respondents made gains of 2.0. Five respondents scored on the high side of the rating scale, 4.0 - 5.0, so that the response was favorable and positively skewed.

The largest statistical difference, by far, was in the use of learning/interest centers in teaching. Respondents scored an average mean of 1.0 on the pre-assessment item, and a 5.0 when the item was posttested. This resulted in a significant statistical difference of 4.0.

Since no instructors had ever used learning/interest centers in their instructional strategies, the participants rated this item low, and since each instructor and aide helped design and was responsible for implementation of these centers, the rating inevitably was skewed at the upper level of the rating scale (5.0). A follow-up question is recommended to be added to assess the impact of using learning centers as a voluntary activity. Perhaps a question structured such as this could be added: "If I were to teach in another school, I would use learning/interest centers in my teaching."

As an additional assessment of the application of knowledge of child growth and development, three on-site visitations were made and observation of physical organization of rooms, instructional techniques of teachers, and the nature of interactions between child and teacher as

well as among the children themselves were informally assessed using a structured set of observable guidelines (Appendix G). Instructors participated in the restructuring of the physical setting by designing an arrangement that accommodated space for a learning/interest center. This informal assessment tool was used for all three on-site visitations and in all three classrooms in the child care center. On the first visitation this writer observed no interest/learning activity centers in operation in any of the three classrooms. Plans were, however, underway to arrange physical space within the classrooms and following The Responsive Care Model (1973), one area was set up in each classroom and designed as the task area.

By visitation one, task areas were being formulated at staff in-service meetings. The two-year-old class was selected to house the active interest area or I Can Do It area which would include gross motor activity to enhance the development of body images, spatial and directional awareness, balance, and fundamental body movements. The three-year-old area developed the expressive area or the And So There Was Me area in which creative art experiences were expressed. The four-year-old classroom developed a task area called A Space To Discover Me. This area was to be devoted to books with listening stations, socio-dramatic play, and other oral language activities.

A comparison of the design of specific learning/interest centers between visitation one and visitation three using

selected questions from Part IV of the Specific Learning Format (Appendix G) indicates the following:

Table 3

Results of Direct Observation Instrument Part IV - Specific Learning Center

QUESTION	FIRST VISITATION			THIRD VISITATION		
CLASSROOM:	1	2	3	1	2	3
Are learning centers available?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is the learning center arranged as a distinct center within the learning environment?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are there materials available for experiences in a particular area?	NA	NA	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is the center arranged to allow children to explore independently?	NA	NA	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is the center attractive and inviting?	NA	NA	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are there currently planned experiences for the area?	NA	NA	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes

A comparison of the visitations in Table 3 indicates dramatic growth in both the physical arrangement and in the

infusion of activities into the classroom environment to stimulate motor, expressive, and oral readiness skills at each level of cognition. A restructuring of the play time activities allowed the children to experience all three areas of play on a rotating basis. Enough varied materials were available so that children could explore the center freely at their own cognitive level.

Interest learning centers were to be changed monthly, with the classroom teacher responsible for the creation and implementation of a new center in her room. Thematically, the areas were to remain as designated by The Responsive Care Model program. The designs of the three centers would be the responsibility of all the instructors at one of their weekly staff meetings. Materials collection and the actual set-up of each area were to be the responsibility of each classroom teacher and aide in whose classroom the center was placed.

At the first on-site visitation, instructors were given graph paper and the charge of diagramming their room as it now existed. In another color, they then drew changes they would make in the physical arrangement of the room to accommodate one large task area (the concept had already been explained and decided). Results of this exercise served as blueprints for the reconstruction of the physical environment of each classroom.

Implementation of activities areas was directly observable during visitation two. Continued stimulation

of the environment through decorating and adding materials made the results dramatic by the last visitation (visitation three).

After visitation three, this writer attended a staff meeting which was devoted to the generation of ideas for the next month's learning/activity centers. The extension of the I Can Do It task area to the out-of-doors this summer--with the inclusion of alphabet, numerical, and possible geometric patterns painted on the hardtop playground area (see Appendix I)--extended the commitment of the staff to the use of learning/activity centers. Also the volunteer work of a retired physical education teacher in extending the concepts of movement education to the learning/activity center generated an added sense of purpose and enthusiasm among the staff. Plans to extend the knowledge of child growth and development through the use of The Growing Years video cassette series further demonstrated the positive results of education and skills application as a successful approach to educating child care workers in their own environment.

The criteria for measurement of a successful and effective workshop series was determined through administration of an in-service evaluation form (Appendix D). This writer distributed, collected, and evaluated the results. A numerical value was assigned to each of the descriptive assessment terms and are as follows: excellent (4), good (3), fair (2), and poor (1). These numerical values were

then assigned to items 1, 2, and 4 of the participant's evaluation sheet. Each item was then assessed independently and an overall mean of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale was considered by this writer as a successful workshop.

Table 4

Evaluation of Effectiveness of Workshop Series

Item	4.0 Excellent	3.0 Good	2.0 Fair	1.0 Poor	Overall Mean
1	6	1	0	0	3.9
2a	5	2	0	0	3.7
2b	7	0	0	0	4.0
2c	6	1	0	0	3.9
(Total Mean for Items 2a, 2b, and 2c = 3.9)					
4	5	2	0	0	3.7
(Total Overall Mean = 3.9)					

The results of Table 4 indicate a successful workshop. The overall mean of 3.9 was well above this writer's expectations for the workshop series and indicates an overall enthusiasm and understanding of the goals and objectives of this practicum report.

Written responses in the evaluation of the workshop series are included in Table 5. Should one wish to extend this workshop series, consideration of these additional topics may give some insight into additional concerns.

Table 5

Written Responses On Evaluation of Workshop Series

QUESTION: "What New Topics Should Be Added To Future Programs?"
1. "Definitely the use of behavior modification."
2. "Discipline techniques."
3. "More information on how to use oral language skills with the child."
4. "How to get parents to work with their child in extending these skills."
5. "We need to include a psychologist to teach each of us to help who are suffering the effects of divorce."
6. "More about how children learn through play."

B. Conclusions

Comparing the post-assessment instrument (Appendix C) to the pre-assessment instrument (Appendix B), demonstrated that knowledge in early childhood growth and development increased markedly. When the caregivers were directly instructed in the fundamentals of early childhood education, there was a change in classroom practices as well as in the teacher's style. While most instructors were teacher-centered and used the traditional classroom approach at the beginning of the workshop series and visitations, the

teachers indicated a preference for the more child-centered approach to learning in which the instruction was based on the child's interests and cognitive level of development.

Although instructors designed the same learning/interest center activities to be used by two-, three-, and four-year-olds, they were cognizant of the varying levels of play. As a result of age-stage recognition becoming more apparent in the use of these centers, a more open-interactive or child-centered approach naturally followed in which instructors emphasized direct experience with learning materials and responded with experiences designed to stimulate the physical environment to enhance the intellectual, social, and physical needs of each child. The reported results indicate clearly that education and application of theoretical principals to classroom practice can only result in a more positive learning experience for both the child and those instructing him/her.

C. Recommendations

This writer highly recommends an extension of the workshop sessions to include a fourth workshop session. Material presented can then be evenly distributed and participants given more time to digest the information.

Also, the training of a county level person to assume the role of early childhood educator is also recommended. This liaison, perhaps the reading specialist, an elementary education specialist, or some other representative, would

then be able to link the preschool staff with the kindergarten teachers, thereby creating a stimulating educational exchange of ideas and resources.

The use of senior citizens as resource volunteers would greatly enhance the preschool program. Perhaps retired educators would volunteer their expertise in the setting up of learning/interest centers.

An on-site professional library for the staff needs to be created to stimulate ideas and creativity in a professional atmosphere. Ideas for setting up various learning centers could be collected into a vertical file, and subscriptions to early childhood magazines could enhance the professional environment.

In conclusion, the implications of the work reported in this practicum are significant. Since the state of Florida does not, as of this practicum writing, specify uniform guidelines for educational certification, the responsibility rests with each of the 67 counties within the state. If, as is the case in Charlotte County, no educational certification or requirements of any kind are mandated in either the public or the private child care facilities operating in this county, where then do the child care workers receive the education and guidelines necessary to work with preschool children?

On-site educational programs in the form of workshop series on child growth and development, although seemingly a "band-aid" approach is, at this writing, the only

alternative in Charlotte County and perhaps in several other of Florida's 67 counties state-wide. Since the results of the educational survey (Appendix A) and of the related literature search indicate that, because of low wages, most child care workers cannot afford to travel great distances to attend workshops or college courses, the on-site workshop approach seems to be a temporary solution to the education of child care workers so that they in turn will be better equipped to match a child's learning and her cognitive level of development.

D. Dissemination

During the implementation phase, this writer was approached by other child care personnel and asked to repeat the workshop series on child growth and development at their on-site locations. Plans are already underway to replicate this workshop series at various on-site locations during the next academic school year. Selected portions of this final practicum will also be presented to the Director of Elementary Education at the Charlotte County School Board office. It is hoped that the workshop series will be offered at on-site locations throughout Charlotte County by the School Board's Reading Consultant with special training given by this author. Also, parts of this practicum will be utilized as resource material for Cluster 17's Outreach program which will ultimately concern itself with the setting of standards for educational qualifications of child care workers in the state of Florida.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CHILD CARE

EDUCATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

CHILD CARE EDUCATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete this questionnaire. To maintain confidentiality, do not give your name.

PERSONAL

1. Sex: Male _____ Female _____ 2. Age _____

JOB

1. Full-time or part-time? Full-time _____ Part-time _____
2. How long have you worked in the field of Child Care? Years___Months____
3. How long have you worked at your present Child Care Job? Years____Months____
4. What is your job title? _____
5. Please check all the activities below which best describe your job.
   teaching ____parent conferences ____housekeeping chores ____
   daily activity planning ____bookkeeping ____administrative duties ____
   supervision of staff ____hiring of staff ____
   other (specify) _____

EDUCATION/TRAINING

1. Please check the educational level you have completed.
   High School ____ GED ____
   College: Associate ____ Bachelor ____ Master ____Doctorate ____
   Area of Concentration: _____
2. What inservice training have you had in Early Childhood Education?
   Paid work experience _____ Number of Courses _____
   Number of workshops _____
3. Would you be willing to attend workshops on child growth and development?
   Yes _____ No _____ .
   List two areas in which you would most like additional training/workshops:
   _____ _____
4. Would you be willing to pay for this training? Yes _____ No _____
5. Do you subscribe to any professional journals in the field of child care?
   Yes _____ No _____
   Which one(s): _____ _____
   _____ _____

CHILD CARE INSTRUCTIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Read each statement. Place a check mark under the column that best answers the question.

What age children are you teaching?

2 yr. old___ 3 yr. old___ 4 yr. old___

	HIGH				LOW
	5	4	3	2	1
1. I cover a certain amount of planned work by the end of the school year.					
2. I evaluate a child's progress by observation.					
3. I view play time to be just as valuable as direct instructional time.					
4. There is only one activity taking place at one time in my class.					
5. I develop my lesson plans around the interests of the children.					
6. Each child in my class learns at his/her own pace.					
7. I believe that quality is more important than quantity in what a child learns.					
8. My class is quiet when I am instructing a lesson.					
9. If a child is not ready to learn a skill, I have him/her try anyhow.					
10. I feel knowledgeable about child growth and development.					
11. I use workbooks on a regular basis.					
12. I teach everyone the same information at the same time.					
13. Instruction takes place when students are in their seats.					
14. I use learning centers to teach a new skill.					
15. My students get praised when they learn a new skill.					
16. I use the blackboard in my teaching.					

	HIGH				LOW
	5	4	3	2	1
17. I teach letter formation to all my children.					
18. My students can write their name by the end of the year.					
19. I maintain a lesson plan book and keep to those plans each week.					

Complete the following statements:

Children learn best when they _____.

If I could change one thing about my teaching style, I would _____

_____

_____.

The ideal 2, 3, or 4 year old student would be: _____

_____

_____.

Read the characteristics of the three teacher/child curricular models listed and place a check beside the style of teaching that most applies to the way you teach and interact with children.

_____ STRUCTURED/PROGRAMMED: Lessons are teacher planned and directed; oriented toward specific procedures, content and materials; learning experiences are teacher oriented; children do not initiate learning activities; and drill and practice are used to reinforce skills.

_____ OPEN/INTERACTIVE: The teacher initiates activities; the pacing of instruction is according to each child's individual level of learning; emphasis is on learning through direct experiences with learning materials; and, teacher provides a stimulating environment.

_____ CHILD-CENTERED: The teacher takes her cue from observing the behaviors of the child; the teacher responds with experiences for the child from a stimulating physical environment set up for the child; and, the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical needs are equally important.

APPENDIX C

ASSESSMENT OF CHILD CARE INSTRUCTOR'S KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

PART I

Multiple choice: Underline the correct answer choice.

1. Cognition is
   - A. the process of knowing
   - B. influenced by development
   - C. determined through heredity alone
2. Intelligence exists without language in the
   - A. concrete operational stage
   - B. pre-operational stage
   - C. sensori-motor stage
3. Reflexive action is something an infant does
   - A. by conciously moving parts of his body
   - B. using object performance
   - C. instinctively
4. According to Piaget's stages of intellectual development, the stage between ages two - seven is called
   - A. pre-operational
   - B. sensorimotor
   - C. concrete operational
5. Egocentric behavior means that the child
   - A. can see only his point of view
   - B. can see another point of view
   - C. has trouble seeing both his own and another's point of view

6. During early childhood, the child's major means of exploring his world is through
   A. books
   B. play
   C. parental interaction
7. Classification helps a child understand
   A. reversibility
   B. part-whole relationships
   C. assimilation
8. If a child is encouraged to tell about his/her own experiences, he builds
   A. egocentrism
   B. social behavior
   C. expressive language
9. The limitation of the preschool child to reconstruct how things were originally is called
   A. transformation
   B. irreversibility
   C. accommodation
10. Behavior directed toward enhancing the welfare of others is called
   A. social behavior
   B. prosocial behavior
   C. accommodation
11. Which is not an example of a fine motor skill?
   A. using scissors
   B. jumping
   C. drawing

12. The physical, social, emotional, and intellectual areas of a child's growth and development are

A. each separate unrelated areas of growth

B. unaffected by environmental conditions

C. inter-dependent

PART II

Read each statement. Place a check mark under the column that best answers the question:

STATEMENT	RATING SCALE HIGH.....TO.....LOW 5	4	3	2	1
13. I view playtime to be just as valuable as direct instructional time.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
14. I am flexible enough to develop learning activities as they are suggested by the interests of individual children.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
15. There is more than one activity taking place at one time in my class.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
16. I use a variety of activities to stimulate language.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
17. If a child is not ready to learn a skill, I do not have him/her try.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
18. I feel more knowledgeable about child growth and development.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
19. I use learning/interest centers in my teaching.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
20. In my classroom there are many opportunities for dramatic play for boys and girls.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF WORKSHOP SERIES

DATE: _____

Please take a few minutes to complete this evaluation. Your assistance is needed to improve the planning and implementation of future workshops. Thank you.

1. In general, how would you rate this program?

   _____Excellent _____Good _____Fair _____Poor

2. Please rate the instructor on each of the following points:

   a) Effectiveness of Presentation ___Excellent ___Good ___Fair ___Poor

   b) Ability to Communicate ___Excellent ___Good ___Fair ___Poor

   c) Degree of Preparedness/ Organization ___Excellent ___Good ___Fair ___Poor

3. What new topics should be added to future programs?

4. Please indicate how well you feel the objectives of this program were satisfied.

   ____Excellent ____Good ____Fair ____Poor

5. What changes would you recommend in the physical facilities, arrangements, schedules, length of program, time of year, etc.?

6. Would you be interested in attending other programs?

   ____Yes ____No

7. What suggestions do you have for change and improvement in the organization and format of this workshop series?

APPENDIX E

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS FOR WORKSHOPS ON CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Films:

Nelson, T. D. (Producer), & Purdie, L. (Director), (1977). The growing years series [Film]. San Diego, CA: Coast Community College District And University of California.

Records:

Free to be you and me. (Bell Records). Ms. Magazine, Dept. R., 370 Lexington Ave., N.Y. 10017).

Authentic sound effects, J. Holyman, Creator and Producer (Elektra Records EKS7251).

You are special, Fred Rogers (Columbia Record CC24518).

Curriculum:

Oaklahoma Child Development Association Curriculum
Child Development Program
Oscar Rose Junior College
6420 Southeast 15th
Midwest City, Oaklahoma 73110

Books:

Braga, J. (1976). Children and adults: activities for growing together. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Books, continued...

Cherry, C. (1976). Creative play for the developing child. Belmont, CA: Fearon Publishers

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APPENDIX F

CONTENT OF CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP SERIES

Workshop Session I (2½ Hours)

I. Introduction

A. Purpose of workshop sessions

1. to define child care
2. to educate child care instructors to match learning activities to cognitive level of child

B. Goals at workshop sessions

1. to provide an overview of child growth and development
2. to structure the learning environment to meet cognitive levels of the child through use of learning interest centers

C. Outcomes of the workshop sessions

1. child will have increased intellectual growth
2. child will have increased social interactions

II. Overview of Child Growth and Development (0-3 yrs.)

A. Show video cassette "Introduction" from The Growing Years Series (30 minutes)

B. Infant

1. physical development

a. growth

b. motor development

c. sensory abilities

2. cognitive development

a. Piaget's description of sensorimotor development

b. overview of sensorimotor period

3. social development

a. attachment

b. sex-role development

4. language development

a. language acquisition

b. language production

c. sensorimotor foundations of early language

B. Toddler

1. physical development

a. growth

b. motor development

2. cognitive development through play

a. defining play

b. function of play

c. stages in development of play

3. social development

a. through language

b. separation stress

4. language development

a. production of multi-word sentences

b. comprehension of words

Workshop Session II (2½ Hours)

I. Overview of Child Growth and Development (3 - 5 yrs.)

A. Preschool Child

1. physical development

a. growth

b. motor development

2. cognitive development

a. preoperational stage

b. prosocial behavior and cognition

3. social development

a. socialization process

b. prosocial behavior and cognition

4. language development

a. verbal language

b. written language

B. View Films From The Growing Years Series:

#11 - "Preschool Physical Development"

#13 - "Preschool Mental Development"

Workshop Session III (2½ Hours)

I. Review

A. Importance of play in cognition: View Film from The Growing Years Series: #17 "Play"

B. Importance of understanding child's physical, social, cognitive developmental stage in the learning process

C. Importance of interactive language communication

II. Presentation and explanation of teacher/child curricular models

A. Open/Interactive

1. teacher initiates activities
2. pacing of instruction according to each child's individual level of learning
3. emphasis on learning through direct experiences with learning materials

B. Child/Centered

1. teacher takes cue from observing child behavior
2. teacher responds with experiences for the child from stimulating physical environment set up by child
3. intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs are equally important

III. Structuring the learning environment

A. Matching the environment to cognitive stages of development

B. Developing interest centers based on:

1. open/interactive model
2. child/centered model

IV. Conclusion of Workshop Series:

A. Instructors will be presented with a 20 item assessment entitled: Assessment of Child Care Instructor's Knowledge of Child Growth and

Development (Appendix C)

B. Instructors will be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop series (Appendix D)

APPENDIX G

OBSERVATICN GUIDE FOR EVALUATING LEARNING CENTERS

I. Interest Centers

- List the centers you see.
- Are they easily identified? How?
- Are the quiet centers separated from the noisy centers?
- Are the centers attractive and inviting?
- Which learning center has attracted the most children?
- Which learning center has attracted the fewest children?

II. Materials and Equipment

- Is a good variety of materials and equipment available?
- Are materials available to the children without teacher assistance?
- Are there adequate materials for the number of children?

III. Child-Teacher Interaction

- What is the child teacher ratio?
- Do the children behave well when the teacher is looking and badly when the teacher is not watching?
- Does the teacher ever physically express affection for the children?
- Are concern and understanding expressed for the overly aggressive child?
- Are there any "loners" among the children?
- Do you notice any adult interaction with the loners?
- What positive guidance techniques are used?
- How are transitions handled by the teacher? By the Children?

- Is advance notice given to the children prior to the changing of activities?
- Do the children line up to change activities or move naturally?

IV. Specific Learning Center (Select one learning center and answer the following)

- What learning centers are available?
- Is there a center for the area you selected?
- Is it arranged as a distinct learning center within the environment?
- Is it together or separate from similar areas?
- Are there materials available for experiences in the particular area?
- Is the center arranged to allow children to explore independently?
- Is the center attractive and inviting?
- Is there anything in the center that could serve to stimulate curiosity?
- Are there currently planned experiences for the area?
- List all of the equipment that you see in the learning center. Are many children attracted to it?

V. Physical setting

- Draw a diagram of the room locating all learning centers.
- In another color, draw changes that you would make in the arrangement.

APPENDIX H

VALUES OF LEARNING/INTEREST ACTIVITY CENTERS

Name of Learning/Interest Activity _____

Check the values that this activity would provide for the child:

[] Sensory Experience

[] Exploration

[] Self-expression

[] Satisfaction and enjoyment

[] Manipulation

[] Emotional release

[] Exercise, imagination, and initiative

[] Good work habits

[] Learning experience

[] Skill and concentration

[] Eye-hand coordination

[] Harmony, rhythm, and balance

[] Insight into own feelings

[] Development of large muscles

[] Development of fine muscles

List any other values that this activity could provide for young children.

What age level is this activity most appropriate? Why?

What variations of this activity could you use in your classroom? (List two).

APPENDIX I

SUGGESTED PLAYCOURT PATTERNS

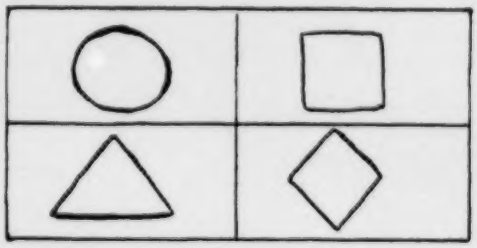
ALPHABET SQUARES

A	B	C	D	E
F	G	H	I	J
K	L	M	N	O
P	Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	X	Y
				Z

NUMBER SQUARES

1	2
3	4
5	6
7	8
9	10
11	12
13	14
15	16
17	18
19	20

SHAPES



APPENDIX J

MOTOR ABILITY, PERCEPTUAL-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT, AND PSYCHOMOTOR SURVEY OF IDEAS

Listed items and activities can be incorporated into formal or informal approaches:

SPATIAL-BODY PERCEPTION

Bilaterial Activities
Body Abstraction
Body Awareness
Body Localization
Directionality Activities
Identification of Body Parts
Imitation of Body Movements
Homolateral Activities
Homologus Activities
Laterality Activities
Self-Identification
Sensory-Motor Integration
Shape/Size/Form Differentation and Discrimination
Unilateral Activities

TACTILE DEVELOPMENT

Active Touch
Discrimination of Textures, Size, Shape, Form, Coins, Materials
Passive Touch

AUDITORY DEVELOPMENT

Acuity
Association
Audition
Decoding
Differentiation
Discrimination
Memory
Reception
Sequencing
Span

FINE MOTOR COORDINATION

Building
Coloring
Copying
Cutting
Doing Puzzles/Mazes
Drawing
Eating
Fitting Forms/Shapes
Grasping
Gripping
Hammering
Lacing
Manipulating
Stacking
Tapping
Tracing
Typing
Winding
Writing

VISUAL

Acuity
Binocular
Closure
Constancy
Copying
Differentiation
Discrimination
Equilibrium
Figure/Ground Relationships
Imagery
Matching
Memory
Monocular
Ocular Control
Ocular Pursuit
Patterning
Sequencing
Shifting
Spatial Relationships
Steering
Tracking
Transformation

GROSS MOTOR COORDINATION

EYE FOOT

Climbing Stairs
Kicking Activities
Motor Planning/Sequencing
Rope Jumping

GROSS MOTOR FUNDAMENTAL

MOVEMENTS

Balancing
Batting
Bouncing
Catching
Climbing
Crawling
Creeping
Dancing
Galloping
Hanging
Hitting
Hopping
Imitative Movements
Jumping
Kicking
Landing
Leaping
Lifting
Marching
Placing
Pulling
Pushing
Rolling
Running
Shifting
Sitting
Sliding
Skipping
Standing
Striking
Swinging
Throwing
Tossing
Walking

GROSS MOTOR COORDINATION

GENERAL

Calisthentic Activities
Exercise
Motor/Planning/Sequencing
Simultaneous Activities
Trampoline Activities
Tumbling Apparatus Activities

GROSS MOTOR COORDINATION

EYE HAND

Ball Activities
Catching Activities
Manipulative/Manual Activities
Tapping Activities
Target Activities
Throwing Activities

BALANCE DYNAMIC

Balance Board Activities
Beam/Rail/Bench Walks
Bounce Board Activities
Locomotor Activities
Stepping Stones
Stunts/Self-Testing Activities
Trampoline Activities

BALANCE STATIC

Balance Board Activities
Beam/Rail/Bench Walks
Stork Stand Series
Stunts/Self-Testing Activities

BALANCE OBJECT

Carry Object
Finger/Band Activities
Stick Activities

MISCELLANEOUS

Agility
Conceptual Activities
Emotional Development
Endurance
Language
Rhythm
Social Development
Speed
Strength

APPENDIX K

HELPFUL READING HINTS FOR PARENTS

CHILDREN WHO ARE READ WITH BECOME READERS.
ENCOURAGE A LOVE OF BOOKS - DON'T INSIST ON 'T.

- Start from a time a child is born. Hand her a book.
- Laugh and have a great time when you read a book to your child. If you like it - she'll love it. Your child wants to please you.
- Read the same book over and over to your child. Each time you read it, she gets something different out of it.
- Touch your child while you are reading. Hold him and kiss him (each time you turn a page). Rock him at the same time.
- Even older children like to be hugged (you read your book, she can read hers - hugging at the same time).
- Read an older child a "remember when" book. Don't worry about necessarily the right age book. You're developing a habit (90% of everything a child will learn throughout life is learned from 0-5 years old).
- Have a quiet family reading time. Teach respect, etc. Everyone reads his own thing. Not schoolwork, but pleasure reading.
- Picture books without words and Caldecott books are beautiful books that create an atmosphere of "language about books".
- Set up a bookcase in the room in the house where all the action is going on.
- If your child spends a lot of time in the bathroom, place a basket of books there.
- Children need a regular bedtime. Send your child to bed 10-15 minutes before that time to read (free, silent reading no matter what age). Reading could be interpreted as reading pictures. Have an older child keep the book he/she is reading in between the mattress and/or in or under the pillow case or under the bed.
- If possible, you read the book beforehand and recommend a book to your child. Say about every book you read: "It's my favorite book."
- Get two copies of the same book. You read one page, the child reads another. Get together and discuss why you did or didn't like the book.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK:

1. Who do you like best in the story? Why?
2. Which character in the book would you like to have as a friend? Why?
3. Was there any person in the story you didn't like? What kind of person is he?
4. Was there any part of the story that was hard for you to understand? Let's talk about it.
5. What new things did you learn from this book?